

Social Skills & Social Graces

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Archangel Michael enters the therapy room for “reunification therapy” with Satan.

Salutations and Greetings:

Michael: Hey, Lucifer. How’s it going?

Lucifer: Hi Michael. Good. Yourself?

Michael: I’m good, thanks. How’s hell.

Lucifer: Same old, same old. Hot. How’s things in heaven?

Michael: No complaints.

Social skills and social graces are a very good thing. We’re not nice to other people because they’re nice. We’re nice to other people because we’re nice.

Social skills are a reflection of who we are, of our values, of our character.

If we treat others with anger and hostility, if we’re rude and contemptuous, this is not a reflection of who they are; it’s a reflection of who we are. If we treat others with anger and hostility, if we’re rude and contemptuous, then we are cruel, petty, and mean.

If, on the other hand, we treat others with gentle kindness and respect, even if they don’t “deserve” it – and especially if they don’t “deserve” it – then this is also a reflection of who we are, of our values and of our character. We are compassionate and kind.

There is never a good or justifiable reason to abandon common social graces, not even if we’re talking to Satan himself. Satan may be the epitome of evil, but we’re not. We can remain true to who we are, to our compassion and gentle kindness.

Disagreements:

Michael: Look, Lucifer. Please stop being so mean. People don’t deserve it. The host of heaven still loves you, if only you’d accept the big fella’s authority and start doing the right thing.

Lucifer: I’m sorry, Michael. I just can’t do that. I’ve got to express my own voice, my own authenticity. I just can’t bow down and be subservient. That’s just not who I am.

Michael: But it hurts other people, Lucifer. I’m just asking if you can please stop hurting people?

Lucifer: I wish I could, Michael. But, again, that’s just not me. Tempting, hurting, leading astray, that’s just kind of what I do. Look, it’s not my fault if people follow me. They should have more backbone.

Michael: Well can you at least accept the big fella's direction in what you do? You can still be you, but just follow the rules and His direction. After all, you're still an angel, even if you're a fallen angel, you can come back to us. We still love you, Lucifer. We want you back.

Lucifer: I miss you guys too, Michael. But I can't come back if I can't be who I am. I have to be who I am, and who I am is just not accepted up there. Don't you understand, Michael? I have to express my voice, my authenticity, even when that disagrees with the big fella. I can't help myself. It's who I am.

Even when we disagree, we can still engage in civil dialogue about our differing views and beliefs. There's no need to become hostile or insulting. We disagree. We're different. We can listen and share, trying to understand the other person's point of view, while still holding to our point of view.

We can also still care about people with whom we disagree. We don't have to agree about things to still like the person. And, who knows, maybe there's some type of compromise between the positions.

Compromise & Parting:

Michael: Well, can you at least send the big fella a birthday card this year? I think He'd really like that. It would mean a lot to Him, to hear from you.

Lucifer: I suppose. I really do miss Him too, and all you guys. Can you let Him know that I still care, even if I can't be who he wants me to be? I'm just being who I am, who he created me to be.

Michael: Yea, I'll let Him know. You take care of yourself, Lucifer. Try to stay out of trouble <smile>.

Lucifer: Yea <smile>, you too Michael. Say hello to Gabriel for me, will ya?

Michael: Yea, sure, stay cool. <fist bump, and they exit, going their separate ways>

Social graces involve polite greetings and polite departures. Saying hello, saying goodbye. Even if your talking to Satan himself, there's no reason you can't have good social skills. Offer polite greetings, offer polite goodbyes. Be nice, not because of who they are, but because of who you are.

Everybody's got a hard life. Sadnesses and tragedies about which we're unaware. No need to add to their burdens.

The problem with the world is not that there's too little suffering, so that we need to add more suffering – The problem with the world is that there's too much suffering, and we should try to take some of the suffering out whenever we can.

Nor is the problem with the world that there is too much happiness, so that we must withhold happiness at every opportunity – No... the problem is that there's too little happiness, and we should try to add more happiness to the world wherever and whenever we can.